



# *The* Wilson Journal of Ornithology

*Published by the Wilson Ornithological Society*

VOL. 118, NO. 1

March 2006

PAGES 1–130

*The Wilson Journal of Ornithology* 118(1):1–2, 2006

## MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR: THE NEW WILSON JOURNAL OF ORNITHOLOGY

This issue of your journal—118(1), March 2006—is the debut issue of *The Wilson Journal of Ornithology*. As indicated in the insert letter that came with your December 2005 issue, the Wilson Council, Wilson Society officers, and I spent considerable time over the last year debating—and eventually agreeing on—the need to update the journal's name and appearance. We believe that the new name maintains the tradition of honoring Alexander Wilson, more clearly reflects the journal's theme and content, and is more contemporary. In addition to the new journal name, the front and back covers have been redesigned, the title page is new, and we have added a new feature to *The Wilson Journal of Ornithology*.

The front cover of each issue will portray a different illustration of one of the species named after Alexander Wilson. Pen and ink or halftone artwork was solicited from over two dozen artists, and we selected those illustrations that we believe demonstrate both ornithological and artistic merit. The Wilson's Snipe on the March cover is a halftone by artist Scott Rashid. Pen and ink illustrations of the Wilson's Phalarope, Wilson's Plover, and Wilson's Storm-Petrel will appear on the covers of the June, September, and December issues, respectively. The fifth species named after Al-

exander Wilson, Wilson's Warbler, will appear on the cover of each issue in a logo designed by George Miksch Sutton, and the Wilson's Warblers that appeared on the cover from 1962 to 2005—also by G. M. Sutton—will now appear on the title page of the first article in each issue.

The back cover (Contents) has also been redesigned, to make it more aesthetically pleasing and easier to read. A new feature, "Once Upon a Time in American Ornithology," debuts, as well. This feature will put forward the observations and reflections of naturalists from times past—to afford retrospection and to remind us all of the exhilaration that comes from being afield and how it once was in American ornithology. I encourage Wilson Ornithological Society members and other readers of the journal to submit favorite historical field accounts (including a brief introductory statement) for consideration of publication in a future issue.

I realize that such cosmetic modifications will have little long-term effect on subscriptions, membership, or the ornithological science offered in *The Wilson Journal of Ornithology*. Combined with a renewed commitment and more substantive changes behind the scenes, however, I believe that the publication

of this issue does mark a new beginning for the Wilson Ornithological Society and its journal: (1) the journal has been published on time beginning with the June 2005 issue, (2) most authors are receiving an initial decision on their work within 3–4 months, (3) the time from manuscript submission to publication now averages only about 12 months, and (4) manuscript submissions are up >20% from 2004. I sincerely hope that you, the readers and authors, welcome the new look and the

improvements we continue to make to *The Wilson Journal of Ornithology*. I thank Wilson Council and officers; Keith Parsons, Karen Ridgway, and the graphics department at Allen Press; Teri Kman; and *The Wilson Journal of Ornithology* Editorial Office staff—Beth Dillon, Alison Goffredi, and Cynthia Melcher. All were instrumental in the execution and realization of the new design changes and in helping to bring *The Wilson Journal of Ornithology* back on schedule.—James A. Sedgwick, Editor.